

The Prairie Light Review

Volume 40 | Number 2

Article 15

Spring 5-1-2018

Arthur

John Grey
College of DuPage

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.cod.edu/plr>

Recommended Citation

Grey, John (2018) "Arthur," *The Prairie Light Review*: Vol. 40 : No. 2 , Article 15.
Available at: <https://dc.cod.edu/plr/vol40/iss2/15>

This Selection is brought to you for free and open access by the College Publications at DigitalCommons@COD. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Prairie Light Review by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@COD. For more information, please contact orenick@cod.edu.

Arthur

He came from darkness
and, from there,
it was on to places darker still.
His road was all obstacles
and thick fog that filled
the landscape overnight.
That was him, sleeping by the riverbank
or resting on the fire escape.
Then it'd rain and it was time to go.
But he always stayed anyhow.
He didn't sing his own song.
That was up to others.
But there were these rants.
Even a painted lady who shared his makeshift bed.
And I once saw him pick up a guitar
and play a tune.
Something he'd learned
before he started drinking.
And with all the sobbing and sorrow
of a recent widower.
But mostly he fed on cheap wine
until he floated like a dead fish.
And he never knew the right time.
His was always year zero.

He left a stain here and there.
And, with him, welfare's work was all in vain.
Couldn't take the monotony.
It was worse than the humidity,
worse even than hard thirst.
When cornered, Arthur could
raise his tail and rattle like a snake.
And it's not that he didn't yearn for paradise.
But he wanted nothing pointed out to him.
No one pushing his life and trying to move it elsewhere.
He came from darkness after all.
It didn't need any fancy enhancements.
And he was always headed
to where the bleakness matched his mood.
He fell sometimes.
He bled a lot.
And yes, he died face down in the gutter.
In case you're wondering, Arthur never wrote a poem.
To the end, he kept the secret
of what we need to know.

-John Grey

"When Time Moves On"
Alana Sadah
Photography